

Remarks

The Examiner is thanked for the early indication of allowable subject matter in claims 10, 14, and 15.

The Specification has been amended to update priority information. No new matter has been entered by any amendments.

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-21 are pending in the application, with 1, 16 and 19 being the independent claims.

Based on the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner alleges the foreign references cited on the Information Disclosure Statement filed March 31, 2004 were not received by the patent office. However, as noted on page 4 of the Information Disclosure Statement Pleading filed March 31, 2004, copies of the foreign references were submitted in the parent application, U.S. Appl. No. 10/270,556. Thus, no hard copies of the foreign references were required to be submitted in the instant application.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider and acknowledge consideration of the foreign references listed in the 1449 filed March 31, 2004.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b)

Claims 1-9, 11-13, 19, and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Published Application No. 2003/0160949 to Komatsuda et al. (“Komatsuda”). Claims 16-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being

anticipated by U.S. 5,623,479 to Takahashi ("Takahashi"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claims 1, 16, and 19 all recite a system and method, respectively, that at least allow for changing/varying of a field height **and** pupil of an illumination beam.

Komatsuda teaches in Figure 1 that element 8 is used to control the field size at the reticle plane (or wafer plane). The field size is not variable. Element 6 is used to only change the pupil size (angular light distribution). Element 4 and the zooms 5 and 7 vary the pupil shape. Thus, although Komatsuda allegedly teaches being able to vary the pupil, Komatsuda fails to teach or suggest being able to also change the field size, which is recited in claims 1, 16, and 19.

Takahashi teaches a pellicle or coating that protects information encoded as a collection of dots on a recording medium from mechanical damage and secondly serves to "defocus" any dust or contamination that collects on the protective coating to reduce contrast of the dust motes compared to the focused image of the encoded dots. The dust cannot be in the same image plane as the recorded dots because the dust is on the external surface of the coating. In the section noted by the Examiner, Takahashi teaches of an optical system for imaging, not illuminating, and the electronics used to discriminate between a dust signal and the focused information signal based on the imaging. The optical system described in Takahashi is a purely imaging application and does not serve to change the illumination beam profile of the system. Thus, Takahashi does not teach or suggest a system capable of varying/changing both the pupil shape and the field height of an illumination beam.

Therefore, neither applied reference teaches of suggest a system and method, respectively, that at least allow for changing/varying of a field height **and** pupil of an illumination beam. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejections. Also, at least based on their dependency from claims 1, 16, and 19, claims 2-15, 17-18, and 20-21 should be found allowable over the applied refernces.

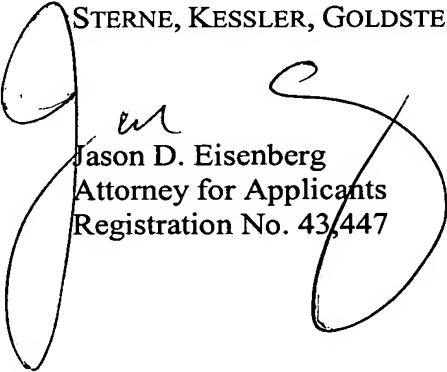
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.


Jason D. Eisenberg
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 43,447

Date: 9/19/03
1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005-3934
(202) 371-2600
SKGF_DC1:443219.1